

The embodiments of the invention in which an exclusive property or privilege is claimed are defined as follows:

1. A method for facilitating a search for content from disparate resources, the method comprising:

displaying a unified search entry interface in response to a request to search for content;

determining at least one relevant resource from a plurality of disparate resources in which to search for occurrences of a search term entered in the unified search entry interface;

normalizing the relevant disparate resource; and

blending disparate results obtained from searching for occurrences of the search term in the normalized relevant disparate resources.

2. The method of Claim 1, wherein normalizing the relevant disparate resource comprises:

determining a relative importance of the search term occurring in one location in a first disparate resource versus the search term occurring in another location in a second disparate resource; and

weighing the occurrence of the search term in the resource in accordance with the relative importance.

3. The method of Claim 2, wherein blending the disparate results includes ranking the results by the weight of the occurrence of the search term, displaying the ranked results by a category associated with the resource, and displaying the locations in which the search terms occurred in comparable positions within each category.

4. The method of Claim 1, further comprising:

capturing a context of the search request; and

wherein determining at least one relevant resource is based on the context of the search request.

5. The method of Claim 1, further comprising:

obtaining an automated measurement of relevance for each of the plurality of disparate resources;

wherein determining the at least one relevant resource is based on the automated measurement of relevance.

6. The method of Claim 5, wherein the automated measurement of relevance is a metric that quantifies a user interaction with the resource.

7. The method of Claim 6, wherein the quantified user interaction includes at least one of a frequency with which a user accesses the resource, a length of time that the user accesses the resource, and a significance of an action that the user performs on the resource.

8. The method of Claim 1, further comprising:  
obtaining a user preference indicating a preferred resource in which to search;  
wherein determining the at least one relevant resource is based on the preferred resource as indicated in the user preference.

9. The method of Claim 1, further comprising:  
building an index for the disparate resources; and  
searching the index associated with the relevant resource when searching for occurrences of the search term.

10. A system for a unified search for electronic content, the system comprising:  
a plurality of disparate resources containing searchable content;  
a repository for storing automated relevance data collected for the resources;  
a search term input; and  
a processor to determine which of the disparate resources is the most relevant to the search term input, based on the automated relevance data, normalization of the relevant resources, search for the search term in the normalized relevant resources, and blended results from the search for display to a user, where the results represent relevant but disparate content obtained from at least one of the normalized relevant resources.

11. The system of Claim 10, wherein normalizing the relevant resources includes determining comparable data from the disparate resources in which to search for occurrences of the search term.

12. The system of Claim 11, wherein blending results from the search includes ranking the disparate results based on the relative importance of the occurrence of the search term in the comparable data and displaying the comparable data from each of the results in a uniform manner.

13. The system of Claim 10, further comprising a user preference input, and wherein determining which of the disparate resources is the most relevant to the search term input is based on the user preference input.

14. The system of Claim 10, further comprising a context input, wherein determining which of the disparate resources is the most relevant to the search term input is based on the context.

15. The system of Claim 14, wherein the context input represents navigation events leading up to the input of the search term and determining which of the disparate resources is the most relevant to the search term input is based on the navigation events.

16. The system of Claim 14, wherein the context input represents an application from which the input of the search term originated, and wherein determining which of the disparate resources is the most relevant to the search term input is based on the application.

17. The system of Claim 10, further comprising an index associated with content in the disparate resources; and wherein searching for the search term in the normalized relevant resources includes searching the index associated with the resource.

18. The system of Claim 10, wherein automated relevance data contains a metric that represents a measurement of at least one of a frequency with which a user accesses the

resource, a length of time that the user accessed the resource, and a significance of an action that the user performed on the resource.

19. The system of Claim 18, wherein the disparate resources that are the most relevant are those having at least one of the highest frequency, the greatest length of time, and the most significant action.

20. A computer-accessible medium having instructions for conducting a unified search for electronic content, the instructions comprising:

displaying a unified search entry interface in response to a request to search for content;

determining at least one relevant resource from a plurality of disparate resources in which to search for occurrences of a search term entered in the unified search entry interface;

normalizing the relevant disparate resource; and

blending disparate results obtained from searching for occurrences of the search term in the normalized relevant disparate resources.

21. The computer-accessible medium of Claim 20, wherein the instruction to normalize the relevant disparate resource comprises:

determining a relative importance of the search term occurring in one location in a first disparate resource versus the search term occurring in another location in a second disparate resource; and

weighing the occurrence of the search term in the resource in accordance with the relative importance.

22. The computer-accessible medium of Claim 20, wherein the instruction to blend the disparate results includes instructions to rank the results by the weight of the occurrence of the search term, display the ranked results by a category associated with the resource, and display the locations in which the search terms occurred in comparable positions within each category.

23. The computer-accessible medium of Claim 20, wherein the instructions further comprise:

capturing a context of the search request; and

determining the at least one relevant resource based on the context of the search request.

24. The computer-accessible medium of Claim 20, wherein the instructions further comprise:

obtaining an automated measurement of relevance for each of the plurality of disparate resources; and

determining the at least one relevant resource based on the automated measurement of relevance.

25. The computer-accessible medium of Claim 24, wherein the automated measurement of relevance is a number that represents a user interaction with the resource, wherein the user interaction includes at least one of a frequency with which a user accesses the resource, a length of time that the user accessed the resource, and a significance of an action that the user performed on the resource, and the resource is more relevant to the search when the automated relevance number is high, and less relevant when the automated relevance number is low.

26. The computer-accessible medium of Claim 20, wherein the instructions further comprise:

obtaining a user preference indicating a preferred resource in which to search; and

determining the at least one relevant resource based on the preferred resource, as indicated in the user preference.